

**Amendments to the Specification:**

Please amend the specification as follows:

Please replace paragraph starting at page 5, line 27, with the following rewritten paragraph:

As previously mentioned, as the transition from SS7 networks to IP networks takes place, there may be times when network equipment residing on an SS7 network ~~304~~ needs to communicate with a service application provided uniquely on an IP network. Such a scenario is illustrated in Figure 4.

Please replace paragraph starting at page 6, line 12, with the following rewritten paragraph:

One way of avoiding the need for a signaling gateway is to provide dual versions of each service application, each one adapted for each particular network, as illustrated in Figure 5. Figure 5 ~~[[is]]~~ shows a network configuration in which a first version of a service application 506 is provided on an SS7 network 504, and a second version of the service application 512 is provided on an IP network 510. Although the service applications 506 and ~~[[518]]~~ 512 may provide the same functionality, they are provided as two separate and distinct applications. Since they are different applications, each is allocated a different point code. For example, SS7 network equipment 502 addresses the service application 506 using the point code '10', and the IP network equipment 508 accesses the service application 512 using the point code '11'. In this way, the same functionality may be accessed by network equipment on either an SS7 or an IP network, without requiring the expense of a signaling gateway.

Please replace paragraph starting at page 6, line 31, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Additionally, where the service application is, for example, a home location register (HLR), both applications 506 and ~~[[518]]~~ 512 may need to maintain a shared and synchronized database (not shown).

Such a requirement introduces additional technical difficulties such as ensuring that such a database is accurately synchronized.

Please replace paragraph starting at page 7, line 4, with the following rewritten paragraph:

Figure 7 is a diagram showing a network configuration according to an embodiment of the present invention. A service application 706 is provided which sits on both an SS7 network 704 and on an IP network 708. Since the application is a single application a single point code may be allocated thereto. Thus, if network equipment 702, on the SS7 network 704, needs to communicate with the service application 706, a signaling message may be sent using the point code '10', via the SS7 network 704. Similarly, if network equipment 710, on the IP network 708, needs to communicate with the service application 706, a signaling message may also be sent using the point code, '10', via the IP network 708.